



Carbon Neutral FAQs

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What does climate change really mean?

Climate is defined as the weather averaged over a long period of time, typically 30 years, but other periods may be used depending on the purpose. Weather itself is a shorter-term observation relating to the condition of the atmosphere at a particular place and time measured in terms of such things as wind, temperature, humidity, pressure and precipitation. In most places weather can and often does change from season to season, day to day and even from hour to hour.


Climate change refers to any major or significant change in measures of climate that characterise the regions of the world, such as temperature, precipitation or wind. Climate usually stays the same for centuries if it is left alone. However, in addition to natural factors, it is now accepted that the activities of mankind also play a major role in changing the Earth's climate.

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What causes climate change?

Although there are number of natural factors that can influence the climate over long periods of time, such as continental drift, volcanic activity and even natural changes in sea currents, by far the greatest influence on climate has been human activity, which has resulted in a growing and powerful trend towards global warming.

Since the start of the Industrial Revolution in 19th century Britain, the use of fossil fuels to drive industrial output has resulted in the production of large amounts of gases and



pollutants. In modern times, volumes of industrial activity have risen and new uses have been found for hydrocarbons such as coal, coke, natural gas, petroleum and oil. One of the major side effects of burning fossil fuels is the production of CO₂ and other greenhouse gases.

Deforestation to make way for agricultural or industrial land use has resulted in enormous swathes of CO₂ breathing forest to be cut down. Furthermore, the burning of wood has caused the carbon contained in the trees to be released as CO₂.

Coal mining, landfills, leaking gas pipelines and the large numbers of meat and dairy cattle we farm today produce methane, another greenhouse gas, which presently contributes to approximately 30% as much warming as CO₂. The production and use of fertilizers and other chemicals release nitrous oxide, which today causes around 10% as much warming as CO₂ emissions.

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What is global warming?

Global warming is the process leading to a marked increase in the Earth's temperature, and is attributed to the 'greenhouse effect'. This effect is caused by the release of large amounts of greenhouse gases into the Earth's atmosphere. Greenhouse gases (GHG) include carbon dioxide (CO₂), chlorofluorocarbons (CFC's), methane (CH₄), nitrous oxide (N₂O), tropospheric ozone (O₃), and water vapour.

The greenhouse effect is a warming process that causes an imbalance in the Earth's natural cooling processes.

- Sunlight passes through the Earth's atmosphere as short-wave radiation.
- Some of the radiation is absorbed by the planet's surface.
- As the Earth's surface is heated, it emits long wave radiation towards the atmosphere.
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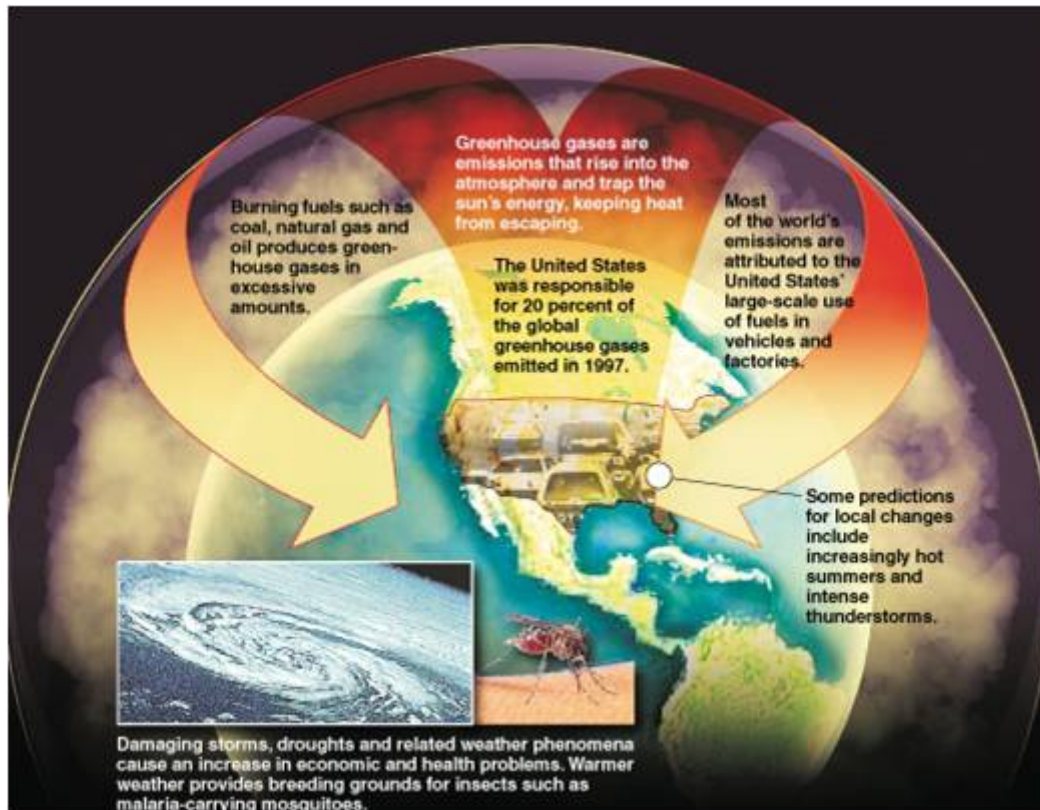
In the atmosphere, some of the long wave radiation is absorbed by greenhouse gases and each molecule of greenhouse gas becomes energized by the long wave radiation, and these molecules then emit heat energy in all directions.

- By emitting heat energy towards the Earth, greenhouse gases increase the Earth's overall temperature.

The greenhouse effect is a natural occurrence that maintains the Earth's average temperature at approximately 60 degrees Fahrenheit. Without the greenhouse effect,

temperatures on Earth would be much lower than they are now. However, the increased concentration of greenhouse gases in the Earth's atmosphere is increasing the greenhouse effect resulting in an increase in global temperatures as well as changes in precipitation patterns.

An illustration of the greenhouse effect



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What is the impact of global warming?

Key Concerns:

- Sea level rise due to the melting of the polar ice sheets causing coastal flooding.
- Changes in the amount and pattern of precipitation resulting in flooding and drought.

- Changes in frequency and intensity of extreme weather events.
- Changes in agricultural yields.
- Species extinction: for example when it comes to plant migration, climate may change faster than plants can move from one region to another which may cause species extinction, lower biodiversity and changes in the way species interact.
- Increase in the range of disease vectors: rising temperatures lead to more heat related illnesses, increased breathing problems and the spread of unwelcome organisms such as the malaria mosquito, which survives in warm weather.

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Does carbon offsetting contribute to resolving climate change?

On its own, carbon offsetting does not completely solve climate change but it does have a large part to play in the overall picture. Offset projects reduce emissions, however all of the world's offset projects combined are not enough to solve the problem of climate change. Major behavioral and technological change is required to have a significantly positive impact on our climate.

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What does Carbon Neutral mean?

An individual or an organisation can become Carbon Neutral, once it reduces its carbon emissions internally and then purchases offsets to balance the unavoidable carbon footprint. It is the point at which the equivalent amount of CO₂ produced by a manufacturing process, distribution system and / or product use is equal to the amount being removed. A Carbon Neutral program involves the assessment of carbon emissions, the reduction of emissions at source, and the 'offset' of unavoidable emissions.

This process is illustrated graphically in the diagram below:

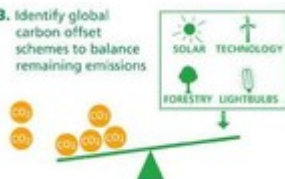
1. Carry out a greenhouse gas assessment to ABC plc to establish baseline CO₂ emissions



2. Identify cost-effective ways to reduce CO₂ emissions



3. Identify global carbon offset schemes to balance remaining emissions



4. Use carbon offsets to balance some or all remaining emissions





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What is the process of becoming Carbon Neutral?

An organisation can become Carbon Neutral by using the following process:

Measure: Calculate your Greenhouse Gas Emissions (carbon footprint).

Target: Set internal targets to reduce your carbon footprint at source.

Reduce: Work towards achieving your internal reduction targets and purchase offsets to balance the unavoidable carbon footprint.

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What are carbon offsets?

A carbon offset is a financial instrument that reduces greenhouse gas emissions. Carbon offsets are measured in metric tonnes of carbon dioxide-equivalent (CO₂e). One carbon offset represents the reduction of one metric tonne of carbon dioxide or its equivalent in other greenhouse gases. By purchasing offsets you are in essence investing in an organisation to reduce carbon emissions on your behalf. This is done through a variety of project types such as wind farms, solar projects, or the replacement of wood-burning stoves with less polluting ones, to name a few.

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What kind of carbon offset projects are used in EcoVentures' Carbon Neutral services?

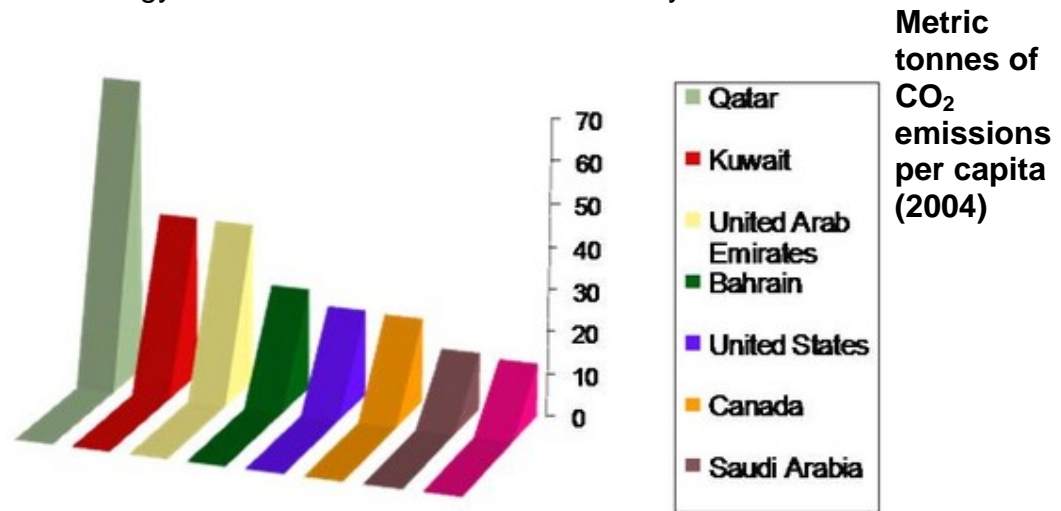
EcoVentures has partnered with The CarbonNeutral Company to provide offset based advisory services to its clients in the MENA region and our offset projects are selected against the highest possible environmental standards. One of the key ways to stop global warming is to use new technology, such as wind and hydro energy, and channel our customers' money into projects to do just that. In India, for example, we have enabled local generators to switch from diesel to biomass (natural compost with lower CO₂ emissions). We then use the savings in CO₂ emissions to balance out some of our customers' CO₂ production - thereby helping them to go Carbon Neutral. Our technology projects not only reduce CO₂ emissions, they also help to promote rural economies and

local communities.

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What is the Middle East's carbon footprint?

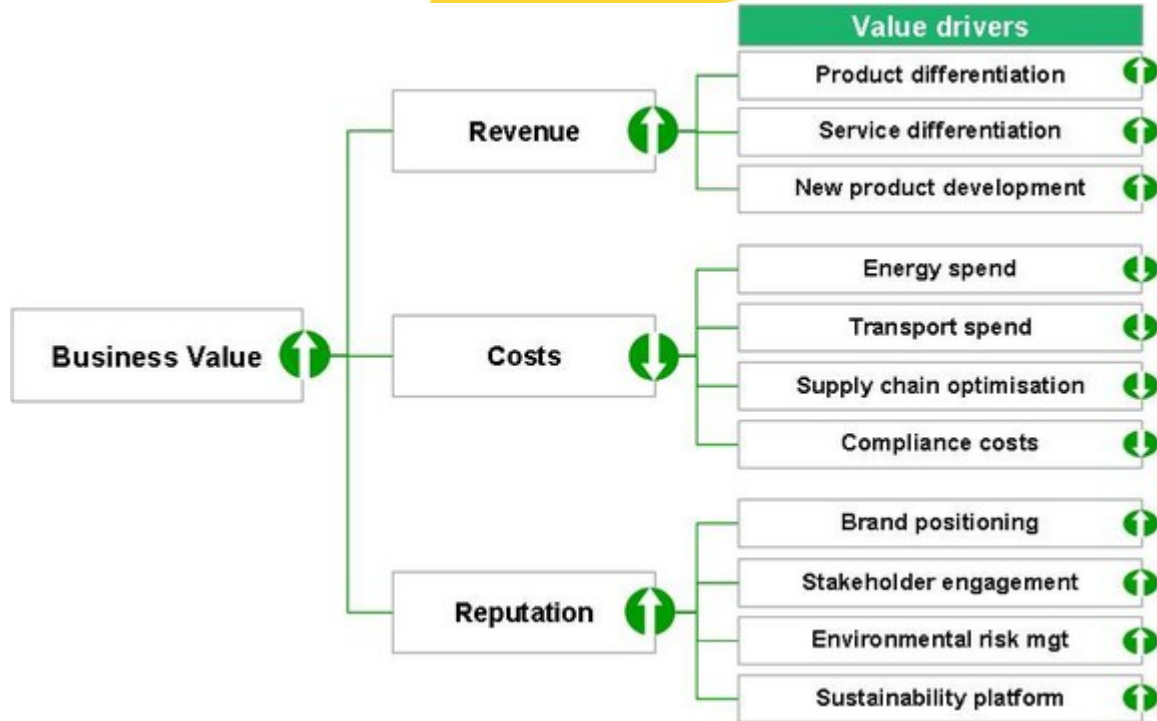
The world's carbon dioxide emissions are expected to increase by 1.9 percent annually between 2001 and 2025. The Middle East region is ranked as number four in the level of CO₂ emissions per capita after North America, Eurasia and Europe according to the US Department of Energy's Carbon Dioxide Information Analysis Centre.



Source Data - the US Department of Energy's Carbon Dioxide Information Analysis Centre

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What are the benefits of becoming Carbon Neutral?



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What is the business value of carbon offsets?

Offset-based carbon management strategies have a vital role to play because they:

- Provide an immediate response to the need for material reductions in global greenhouse gas emissions;
- Use principles of efficient markets to identify and enable those reductions wherever they can be made fastest and at the lowest cost;
- Speed progress to a low / no carbon economy by enabling additional investment in carbon reduction technologies over and above that achieved by Government regulations;
- Establish a 'price for carbon' which promotes investment in cleaner technologies and processes, and in low carbon assets;
- Enable those who are not obliged to take action to set and meet meaningful reduction targets by fully or partially balancing out their greenhouse gas emissions;
- Engage and communicate with individuals and organisations about the impact that they can make towards solving climate change.

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Is becoming Carbon Neutral expensive?

You would be surprised to learn that it takes less than AED 2.5 per employee per day in an average company to become Carbon Neutral.



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Who is EcoVentures?

EcoVentures is the Middle East's premier emissions reduction firm. Based in the United Arab Emirates, the firm helps companies across the Middle East and North Africa reduce their environmental impact by becoming Carbon Neutral, offsetting their emissions, and replacing their use of fossil fuels. EcoVentures delivers sound consultancy, advisory and management services to public and private sector organisations in the Middle East and North Africa region, using global best practices and meeting internationally recognised standards. EcoVentures specialises in the following areas: emissions reduction advisory, carbon finance, alternative fuels, and green building advisory. For further details visit: www.ecoventures.ae

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